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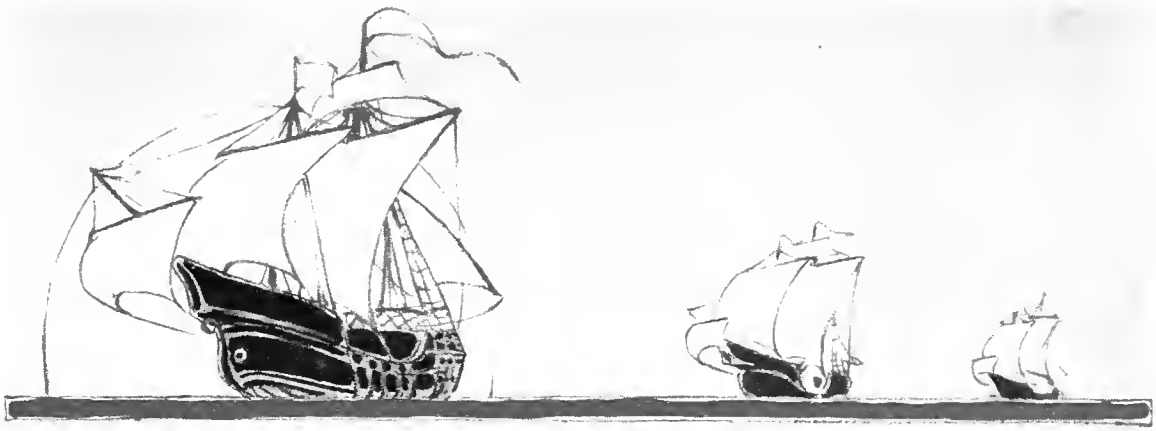
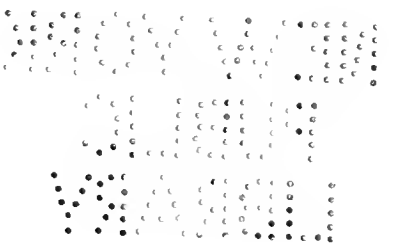
THE SHINING SHIP

ISABEL ECCLESTONE MACKAY

HE EMBARKED ONCE MORE
DOWN THE PATH THAT LEADS TO THE SUN'S BACK DOOR





THE SHINING SHIP

And Other Verse for Children

BY

ISABEL ECCLESTONE MACKAY
Author of "Up the Hill and Over," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY
THELMA CUDLIPP

NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

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THE SHINING SHIP

THE SHINING SHIP

ALL day I see the ships sail in, the sun upon their spars,
And silently at night they pass between me and the stars.
Oh, many, many ships there be,
From Biscay Bay and China Sea!
But never comes a ship for me,
Across the flooding bars.

All day I watch the ships sail out, so brave and gallantly;
And while I sleep they sail away, impatient for the sea,
Strange ways are theirs, where strange winds blow,
Strange islands loom and strange tides flow—
But round and round the world they go
And never wait for me.

One day a shining ship shall ride at anchor by the quay;
From her slow-furling sails shall shake the scents of Araby;
She bears no name, she cannot stay;
But on her decks I'll sail away,
To China Sea and Biscay Bay—
Oh, she's the ship for me!

SPRING WAKING

A SNOWDROP lay in the sweet, dark ground.
"Come out," said the Sun, "come out!"
But she lay quite still and she heard no sound;
"Asleep!" said the Sun, "no doubt!"

The Snowdrop heard, for she raised her head,
"Look spry," said the Sun, "look spry!"
"It's warm," said the Snowdrop, "here in bed."
"O fie!" said the Sun, "O fie!"

"You call too soon, Mr. Sun, *you do!*"
"No, no," said the Sun, "Oh, *no!*"
"There's something above and I can't see through."
"It's snow," said the Sun, "just snow."

"But I say, Mr. Sun, are the Robins here?"
"Maybe," said the Sun, "maybe";
"There wasn't a bird when you called last year."
"Come out," said the Sun, "and see!"

The Snowdrop sighed, for she liked her nap,
And there wasn't a bird in sight,
But she popped out of bed in her white night-cap;
"That's right," said the Sun, "that's right!"

SPRING WAKING (*Continued*)

And, soon as that small night-cap was seen,
A Robin began to sing,
The air grew warm, and the grass turned green,
" 'Tis Spring!" laughed the Sun, " 'tis Spring!"

THE WONDERFUL FISHING OF PETERKIN SPRAY

A FISHERMAN bold was Peterkin Spray,
And he sailed and he sailed and he sailed away.
And when he got there, he embarked once more
Down the path that leads to the Sun's back door.
"Ho, Ho," said the Sun, "here is Fisherman Spray,
But the cook doesn't need any salmon to-day."

"Too bad, Mr. Sun," said Peterkin Spray,
And he sailed and he sailed and he sailed away,
But the wind was so light that 'twas half past eight
When he called his wares at the Moon-man's gate.
"Fresh fish!" he cried, but the Moon-man said,
"I never eat fish when I'm going to bed."

"What a fussy old Moon!" sighed Peterkin Spray,
And he sailed and he sailed and he sailed away,
And when he got there, he exclaimed "My Stars!
I had almost forgotten to call on Mars."
"Fine fish," cried Mars and he smacked his lips,
"Charge a dozen or so to my next eclipse!"

"O dear, O dear!" sighed Peterkin Spray,
And he sailed and he sailed and he sailed away,

THE WONDERFUL FISHING OF PETERKIN SPRAY
(*Continued*)

And when he got there, he declared, "I wish
I never, never had learned to fish.
For some won't buy and others won't pay,
And I'm tired, and tired of sailing away!"

"I know what I'll do!" said Peterkin Spray,
And he turned his boat down the Milky Way.
He opened the Dipper (yes, honest, he did!)
He popped in his cargo, and slapped down the lid.
"Here's a kettle of fish!" laughed Peterkin Spray.
And he sailed and he sailed and he sailed away.

NAUGHTY JOHNNIE FROST

LITTLE Leaf," said young Jack Frost,
"Pretty Leaf," said he,
"Tell me why you seem so shy,
So afraid of me?
I protest I like you well—
In your gown of green
You're the *very sweetest* Leaf
I have ever seen!"

"Run away," said little Leaf,
"Prithee, run away!
I don't want to listen to
Anything you say.
Mother-tree has often said:
'Child, have naught to do
With young Johnnie Frost'—I think
That, perhaps, he's *you!*"

"Nay, believe me, little Leaf,
Pretty Leaf! Indeed
To such silly, idle tales
You should pay no heed!
I protest a leaf so fair
Need not bashful be—
There's no reason why you should
Feel afraid of me."

NAUGHTY JOHNNIE FROST (*Continued*)

"Well, perhaps," said little Leaf,
"I will let you stay—
If you're really very sure
You mean all you say?
Do you truly like me *best*——"
"Yes, oh *yes!*" he said,
"And, to prove it, pray accept
This new dress of red!"

Very proud was little Leaf,
Whispering with a smile,
" 'Tis a sweetly pretty gown,
'Twill be quite the style!"
Then she chanced to glance around!
"Oh!" and "Oh!" she said—
Every leaf upon the tree
Wore a dress of red!

GARDEN RIVALS

PANSY in the garden-bed
To a Johnnie-jump-up said:
"Surely you are not connected
With the Pansy family tree?
You are much too small and sickly,
And your blossom fades too quickly—
Yet I heard some children saying
That they thought you *looked like me!*"

Johnnie-jump-up merely smiled:
"You are tame and I am wild,
But that there's a close resemblance
Any little child can see.
You are in the garden growing,
I, outside, still there's no knowing
But that you and I are cousins—
Nearer relatives, maybe!"

Said the listening Hollyhock:
"How you silly flowers talk!
I'm amazed such haughty spirit
In such humble things to see!
If you both were tall and graceful,
If you wore a dress as tasteful
As the one I wear, 'twere easy
To excuse your vanity!"

GARDEN RIVALS (*Continued*)

White Rose nodded to Rose Red,
"Did you notice that?" she said.
"Strange indeed, that homely flowers,
Always boast how well they're dressed!
Did you hear the Wind say lately
'*Stiff* things always think they're *stately*
But for perfect grace and beauty
Give me——' you can guess the rest!"

"Doubtless he referred to me,"
Said Carnation Pink; "you see
Some are born to grace and beauty—
'Tis admitted by the wise—
And Carnation Pinks inherit
Beauty, with the grace to wear it—
Not that I would boast about it,
Only—well, just use your eyes!"

Larkspur timidly peeped out:
"What is all the strife about?
Every flower has some beauty—
Don't you think so? Why, then, fall
To debating with each other?
Some like one and some another—
One, I know (his taste is famous)
Likes the Larkspur best of all!"

A PROTEST

I THINK it's queer that boys should be
Sent off to bed right after tea
When it's so jolly out of doors
And there are lots and lots of chores
A boy could do—— I don't see why
They shouldn't be allowed to *try.*

The day's so full of things to do
I never seem to get quite through;
There are so many plays to play
The daylight seems to slip away—
Almost before I've quite begun
My bedtime comes to spoil the fun!

When I am big 'twill be all right
For then I'll stay up most all night—
But mother's big, and mother said
"I wish that I could go to bed!
I feel so tired, little son,
I'm always glad when day is done."

(Wasn't that queer!) I said that she
Could go to bed instead of me,
But mother said, "That will not do—
Sleep is the thing for boys like you,

A PROTEST (*Continued*)

I think it's queer that boys should be
Sent off to bed right after tea.

So you can grow up tall and strong
And never find the day too long."

"And will you take a long rest then,
And never, never work again?
When I'm a man will you be free
To go to bed right after tea?"
But mother only smiled and said
"Yes, dear—some time—now run to bed!"

THE WHITE CAP

ONE day a baby wave was born,
Child of the tide was she,
Safe circled by the warm young morn
And cradled in the sea.

And oh, it was a pleasant thing
The bright new world to know,
To wonder at the gull's wet wing
And why it sparkled so!

To smile back at the sky who sent
A dress of dainty blue,
To thank the wind who chuckling lent
A neat white cap or two.

Then came the kindly moon who gave
A chain of jewels bright,
(For every little baby wave
Wears shining things at night!)

And oh, 'twas just as sweet to lie
Beneath the dancing stars,
To watch the glistening ships sail by
With silver on their spars!

THE WHITE CAP (*Continued*)

To chase the boats of fishermen
And spatter them with spray,
To lift them high, so high! And then
To laugh and run away!

'Twas harmless fun, but, whisper low,
That cap the sly wind lent
Held magic and it made her grow
Quite wild and turbulent.

So when the kind moon went away
She took her diamonds too,
The angry sky grew cold and grey
And took the dress of blue.

The naughty wave began to fear
And sought her mother's lap—
"My child, the cause is very clear,
Take off that saucy cap!"

And when the cap was off, the day
Grew bright, the sky shone fair
And fast asleep the wavelet lay
With sunbeams in her hair!

FATHER'S VALENTINE

FATHER'S got the queerest Valentine!
It's the picture of a little girl
With her hair cut straight across her face,
Plastered down with a wave or curl.

If you'd see her stockings you would laugh,
For they're made with rings like barber's poles,
And she wears the oddest little frock,
With no neck or sleeves but only *holes*.

And I said, "Who is this little girl?
I won't have her for *my* Valentine."
Father laughed and said, "That's just as well—
Long ago she promised to be mine.

"Once I sent that child a sugar heart,
Saying, 'If you love me tell me so,'
And she ate it all—why, little son,
That was mother, thirty years ago!"

IT'S THE PICTURE OF A LITTLE GIRL
WITH HER HAIR CUT STRAIGHT ACROSS HER FACE,
PLASTERED DOWN WITH A WAVE OR CURL.

A VERY EXCEPTIONAL ESKIMO

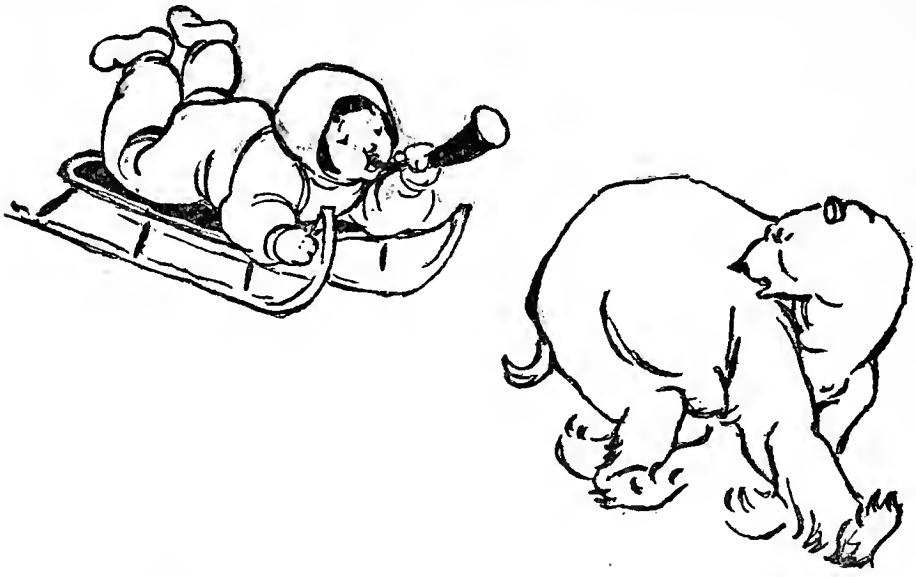
SHALL I tell you a few of the things I know
Of a very exceptional Eskimo?
If you don't believe—but believe you must,
Many stranger things have been told on trust,
And some of the strangest things I've known
Occur far up in the Arctic Zone.

In the Arctic Zone by the Great North Pole
Lives this Eskimo, in a scooped-out hole
In a great snow-bank that is mountain-high—
If you reached the top you could touch the sky!
And his clothes he views with a proper pride,
They are all white fur, with the fur inside.

When he wishes his friends to come to dine
He calls them up on the Polar Line
And says, "Please come at the hour of two
And partake of a dish of sealskin stew,
With codfish oil and a water-ice
And a blubber-pudding that's *very* nice!"

When he goes to ride, he starts his sleigh
And never stops for a whole long day—
Lickety-whiz-z-z! Down a slope of white!
And a reindeer carries him back at night,

A VERY EXCEPTIONAL ESKIMO (*Continued*)



When he goes to ride, he starts his sleigh
And never stops for a whole long day.

While the polar bears from his path he warns
By blowing one of the reindeer's horns!

When he goes to bed it is not enough
To hide his nose in a bearskin muff,
But his ears he wraps, if it's very cold,
In a feather-bed, and I have been told
That he toasts his head—for it really seems,
If he didn't, the cold might *freeze his dreams!*

WHO TOLD?

OUR teacher says there aren't fairies now,
Nor ever was—except in silly talk.
She wouldn't b'lieve that yesterday I saw
A really one down by the river walk!

I did tho', and his eyes were green as green,
He swung (he swang, I mean), upon a limb,
And every swing he took he winked at me,
And I—well, I just up and winked at him!

Said he, "There was a boy who ran away
From school-recess this morning; are you he?"
He looked so nice and jolly that I thought
He wanted to be friends and said, "I be."

"And can you be the lad I heard about
Who carved a pumpkin-head and made a ghost,
To scare your little sister into fits?"
I said, "She always was more skeered than most."

"And did you tell your cousin Julia Ann,
To make her cry, that Santa Claus was dead?"
You bet I wasn't goin' to own to that,
"Aw now, you go an' chase yourself!" I said.

WHO TOLD? (*Continued*)

His twinkly eyes got all so sparkly green,
He grinned the widest grin I ever saw.
"I see," he chuckled. "You're a bad, bad boy,
I think, Horatius Jones, I'll tell your Maw!"

Now what d'ye think of that? When I went in,
Maw, she just sent me straight away to bed—
For playing truant and for scaring girls!—
"A little fairy whispered it," she said.

A SPRINGTIME WISH

O, TO be a robin
In the Spring!
When the fleeting days of April
Are a-wing,
And the air is sweet with knowing
Where the hidden buds are growing,
And the merry winds are going
Wandering!

O, to be a robin
With a nest
Built upon the budding branches—
East or West!
Just to swing and sway and dangle
Far from earth and all its tangle,
Joining in the gay bird-jangle,
With a zest!

O, to be a robin
Just to sing!
Not to have the pain of hating
Anything—
Just to race the foremost swallow
Over hill and over hollow—
And the joy of life to follow
Through the Spring.

LISTEN TO THE RAIN

LISTEN to the Rain!
Hear the merry sounds it makes
As it falls and slides and shakes
From the eaves into the street,
Where its million tiny feet
Hurry, hurry past the door,
Followed by a million more!

Listen to the Rain!
How it gurgles with delight,
Hurling from its dizzy height,
Falling straight and falling true,
Faster now and louder too—
See! The tardy drops and small
Cannot keep the pace at all!

Listen to the Rain!
Ah! It's angry now—I fear
'Tis a scolding voice you hear!
How it scolds the drooping trees,
How it scolds the languid breeze,
How it scolds the birds, poor things,
For the dust upon their wings!

Listen to the Rain!
If you listen hard you'll hear

LISTEN TO THE RAIN (*Continued*)

How the skies grow cool and clear,
How the primrose lifts her head,
How the mountain brooks are fed,
How the earth grows sweet again
With the coming of the Rain!

This is the way Elizabeth draws.
Isn't it funny?

THE RIVAL ARTISTS

THIS is the way Elizabeth draws.
Isn't it funny?
That's a girl, she says, and she says that *this*
Is our white bunny!
Elizabeth's six and goes to school,
She makes the letter
"A" all right, but her "B's" like this
And her "C's" no better—
She makes a house stand on its steps
Without a cellar,
And doesn't attend to me at all
When I want to tell her
That houses never stand on steps
(Or almost never).
She just goes on and makes a pig,
The queerest ever!
The only thing that she can draw
Are pumpkin faces,
And even then the noses go
In wrongest places.
Now I *can* draw. But teacher says
I shouldn't scold her,
Perhaps she'll draw as well as me
When she is older!

One day I digged a 'normus hole.

SUCH FUNNY THINGS

THEY teach such funny things in school!
I never say a word,
But when it's four o'clock I just
Can't b'lieve the things I've heard.

They say the earth is *round,* just like
A ball, and you can go
For miles and never find the edge
Though you try ever so!

SUCH FUNNY THINGS (*Continued*)

They say that should you dig right through,
The other side you'd find,
And lots of China boys and girls
With pig-tails down behind.

(One day I digged a 'normus hole
But, though I tried and tried
And digged and digged, I never came
Out on the other side).

They say the twinkly stars are not
Hung up by strings at all—
But then you know they *have* to be
Or else they'd surely fall!

They say there isn't any sky
Turned over like a bowl
And that the blue's not blue *at all*
But just a big black hole.

And when the shiny sun goes down
Like a great yellow ball
Into the sea at supper time,
It isn't wet at all!

(But this, I think, is likely true,
Because, beyond a doubt,
If it got very soaking wet
Its fire would go quite out.)

SUCH FUNNY THINGS (*Continued*)

They say I do not see the moon
  Move right across the sky—
But then, you know, I *do,* as they
  Can see as well as I!

O dear! they say such funny things,
  I'm hardly *sure* I'm me,
I hardly know the things I know
  Or see the things I see!

BEDTIME NOW!

LITTLE leaves go to bed!" said the Wind
thro' the trees.
"If you stay out so long you will certainly freeze,
I come from the North and I know *what I know*—
Some one's coming this way with a capful of snow!"

Loud murmured the leaves, all a-flutter with dread—
"O dear Mother-tree, did you hear what he said?
But the sun is so bright and the sky is so blue—
He was teasing us, mother, it couldn't be true!

"Why 'twas only last week that we changed our green
gown
For this beautiful mixture—red, yellow and brown—
Go to bed in these clothes?—it just couldn't be done—
Please tell us, dear mother, 'twas but the Wind's fun!"

The Tree shook her head and 'tis sad but 'tis true,
Though she shook it so *gently,* a stray leaf or two
Grew giddy and fell and the Wind laughed "Ho-
Ho!"
And gaily he flattened them out in a row.

"Come on," called the Wind and he swept a low bow,
"You'll have to come soon so you'd better come now;

BEDTIME NOW! (*Continued*)

Never mind your gay dress, what's a crease or a tear?
In the scheme of creation it's not here nor there!"

They fell and they fell, and they covered the ground
And the Wind caught them up and he danced them around
And he laughed a "Good-Night" as he clapped them in bed—
But the leaves were too sleepy to hear what he said!

SAILOR, TELL ME OF THE SEA

SAILOR, tell me of the sea,
All the sights and sounds that be—
When the shore has slipped from sight
And the moon shines clear at night
And there is no wind at all,
Can you hear the mermaids call?"

"Ay indeed! 'Tis like a bell,
Sweet and far across the swell
Of the long cool waves, and soon
You can see them 'neath the moon
Smile and beckon—ay, you can
If you be a Sailor-man!"

"Wondrous, Sailor, is the sea!
Dreadful are the things that be!—
On a breathless day in June
Have you seen the great typhoon
Pounce with rending shriek and roar
On the ship it's waited for?"

"Mate was I, down China way,
When the typhoon seized her prey—
Ay, indeed!—The brig spun round
Like a top on level ground,

SAILOR, TELL ME OF THE SEA (*Continued*)

Then she lifted clear and free—
And plunged down into the sea!"

"Sailor, tell me, is it true
There's a sea no boat wins through,
Where the air is never stirred
By the rush of winging bird
And the drifted wrecks lie by
Rotting 'neath a burning sky?"

"Ay, 'tis true! But no man knows
Where that sluggish current flows!
Only dead ships find the place,
Ships that go and leave no trace—
Many drift on that last tack,
Never any ship comes back!"

"Sailor, Sailor! Speak to me,
Gaze not so across the sea!
Bright it glitters in the sun
And the day is just begun,
Far and white the sea-gulls fly—
Why sits terror in your eye?"

Slow the Sailor turned his head.
"On a day like this," he said,
"On a day like this, went down
My good ship the *London Town*—
Ay, and not less lost is she
For the smiling of the sea!"

OUR HILL

TEDDY and Jock and I play on a hill all day.
Its top goes up to the sky
And Teddy and Jock and I
Are sometime going to climb so high
We'll hear what the star-folk say!

Just us can play on the hill—nobody else would dare!—
Its feet slip into a lake,
And some fine day we'll take
Our luncheon of apples and Johnny-cake
And see what it's like down there.

There's a cave in the hill up there, so black it looks like blue!
It hasn't ever an end—
But some day we intend
To go right in and around the bend—
But it wouldn't be safe for you!

THE WISH

A LEPRECAUN-FAIRY was pegging some shoes,
(Tickety, tackety, tee!)
With long curly toes, like the court-fairies use,
All red like the sumach, in pairs made of twos—
"For fear they'd be lonely," said he!

"O Shoemaker green, I have spied on you thrice!
(Tickety, tackety, tee!)
I have called your name once, I have called your name twice,
And now, Mister Leprecaun, pay me my price!"
"Ah, sure, if ye wish it," said he.

"One wish ye may have for the sight of your eyes,
(And only one, mind ye," said he.)
"So take your time now, that the wish may be wise,
For a wish comin' true is a bit of surprise!"
(Tickety, tackety, tee!)

"And what if I wish for a big, golden ball?
(Tickety, tackety, tee!)
And what if I wish for the blue sky to fall?
And what if I wish for the great world-and-all?"—
"Just be pleasin' your fancy!" said he.

THE WISH (*Continued*)

"But, Leprecaun, dear, tell me what would *you* do?
(Tickety, tackety, tee!)
For how can I know if the sky is real blue?
Is the world-and-all heavy? I'll leave it to you"—
" 'Tis a bit of a handful!" said he.

"And how if you wanted a million of things?
(Tickety, tackety, tee!)
If you longed for the rainbow and wished you had wings,
And a gown of pink velvet and toffy in strings?"
"Sure, I think I'd go crazy!" said he.

" 'Tis plain ye can't choose," said the Leprecaun green,
(Tickety, tackety, tee!)
"So, since I've no time for a shiftless colleen,
Sure, I'll give ye these shoes with a wish in between—
Ye'll find it there—maybe!" said he.

Ochone, and Ochone! He was up and away!
(Tickety, tackety, tee!)
And red as the sumach the fairy shoes lay
With the wish in between—and one fortunate day,
" *'Tis the one wish I wanted!*" said she.

SECRETS

HOW do you think they make the dew?
The wise men tell, but they don't tell true;
For they are so very, very wise
They can't see straight out of both their eyes;
And a drop of dew is a simple thing—
Just a pearl that slips from a fairy's wing.

How do you think they make the snow?
The wise men tell, but they don't know—
They are too wise to understand
That every flake is made by hand,
Yet of ninety million and seventy-three
Each one is made quite differently.

How do you think they make the rain?
The wise men tell, but they don't explain
That a rainstorm isn't a storm at all,
But just the fairies playing ball—
Now listen hard and you'll surely hear
Them laugh and gurgle and call and cheer!

And the frost—why, some wise folk insist
That frost is merely a frozen mist;
They are so wise that they cannot trace
The wonderful weaving of fairy lace.

AND IF THEY SAID "TUT, TUT," THAT WAY,
YOU BE AS WISE AND BLIND AS THEY.

SECRETS (*Continued*)

But look at the windowpane, my dear,
And you will see it as clear as clear.

Now these are secrets—if you tell
Be sure you look about you well
To see that no wise men are near,
For they would say "Ahem!" I fear,
And if they said "Tut, tut!" that way,
You'd be as wise and blind as they!

BIG SISTER'S VALENTINE

THE house seems wrongside out to-day,
Big sister acts the *queerest* way!
At breakfast father said, "My dear,
This tea is somewhat weak, I fear."
And sister said, "I quite forgot
To put the tea into the pot!"
Then when she heard the baby fret
She said, "Whatever's wrong, my pet?"
It took some time for her to think
She'd put no sugar in his drink.
She made Bob's lunch for him, but why
Did she forget to put in pie?
Why did she put Ned's coat on me
And laugh and say she "didn't see"?
Yet all the time she looked so kind
And smiled so nice we didn't mind.
I said quite low to father—"Say,
What makes big sister queer to-day?"
He whispered back, "Small son of mine,
Big sister's got a Valentine!"

HOP-SCOTCH

ALL day I play at Hop-Scotch
And hop and hop and hop,
And when I go to bed at night
I dream I cannot stop,
And all the world and everything
Is one big hop-scotch square,
With just one tired little girl
Hopping and hopping there!

"Clear the way—here comes *Miss Prim!*"

THE RUDE BOY

THERE'S a boy that goes to school,
Billy Jenkens is his name,
And he's just the rudest tease!—
All the girls think it's a shame.

If a girl has got red hair,
He calls "Fire!" If she's fat
And has freckles on her nose
He calls "Seedcake!" just like that!

Oh he is a nawful boy,
I just never look at him—
And to-day he called at *me*
"Clear the way—here comes *Miss Prim!*"

THE DUTCH-CUT

OH! If *I* could only have
Dutch-cut like the other girls!
Every time I ask for it
Mother says, "What! Spoil your curls?"

Then she wonders why I hide
In behind the parlour door,
She just simply won't believe
Curls aren't stylish any more!

THE NEW CLOAK

AFTER school I went to walk
Down a street quite far away
And I wore the new blue cloak
Mother finished just to-day.

Teacher's house is in that street
And I thought perhaps if she
Just should meet me—or if I
Should meet her, how nice 'twould be!

Then—I saw her—and I hid
Round a tree till she went by—
Oh dear me, it's quite too bad
Teachers make a girl so shy!

LITTLE WONDERS

I'D like to know the whisp'ry things
  The trees say to each other
And what the stars mean when they laugh
  And wink at one another.

I'd like to see *inside* the dark
  That girls are so afraid of,
I'd like to feel the velvet stuff
  The summer sky is made of—

It looks so soft and thick and blue
  With not a wrinkle through it,
The fairies iron it, perhaps,
  I wonder how they do it?

I wonder if the noisy brook
  Is cross or only playing—
The birdies chatter all day long,
  I wonder what they're saying!

The cow that jumped above the moon—
  Did it fall down inside it?
It must be there somewhere, you know,
Where does the moon-man hide it?

LITTLE WONDERS (*Continued*)

Does that cow give the milk that makes
The milky-way, I wonder,
And when it bellows loud, is that
What makes the rumbly thunder?

O dear! There's lots of things to know,
But though big folks are clever
And though I ask and ask all day
They never tell me—*never!*

THE WORM TURNS

A NAUGHTY child just pulled me out of bed.
"O what an ugly, squashy worm!" he said,
And he meant me!—
'Tis strange how ignorant a child can be.

I "squashy"?—I, so gently born and bred,
That rose-leaves make a pillow for my head,
While in the heart
Of some sweet bud I watch its petals part?

And "ugly"?—I, so slim, so full of grace
That when my silky length is coiled in place,
Brown row on row,
A finer sight no summer day can show.

I wish that I might take these children rough
And show them where I live! 'Twould be enough
To make them stare
In wonder and amazement and despair—

No child that lives has such a home as I!
For roof it has a bit of bluest sky
So that the rain
And dew and sun peep in and out again.

THE WORM TURNS (*Continued*)

"Oh, what an ugly, squashy worm!"

Its walls are hung with crimson and its floor
Is strewn with golden pollen, and its door,
All made of green,
Is just the daintiest portal ever seen!

My food is delicate. I daily fare
On crumpled petals, dew-steeped, very rare—
Oh, happy I!—
Until some naughty little child comes by!

JACOB UNRECOGNISED

ONE day when I was lyin' in the grass
Watchin' the little clouds a-sailin' by,
I saw a Jacob's ladder all of gold,
It started from a hole up in the sky.

I was so scared an angel might come down
I wriggled in the grass and lay quite flat—
You see, I ain't as good as I could wish,
An' angels don't jes' take to boys like that.

When I got home I told my Maw, because
I thought that she'd be int'rested—but pshaw!
She jes' gave me a look an' said, "My son,
Don't go a-tellin' fibs to fool yer Maw!"

Now, Jacob's Maw b'lieved every word he said,
An' told the neighbours an' made quite a stir,
And got it put in the Old Testament—
But my Maw—why, you jes' can't int'rest her!

LITTLE BLUE-EYED FLOWER

LITTLE Blue-eyed Flower
Grows amid the clover,
Bees and birds the long day through
Hum and flutter over.
"Dearie me!" sighs Blue-eyed Flower,
"If I only had the power
Just to fly and fly and fly—
Who would be as gay as I?"

Little Blue-eyed Flower
Hears the water going
Singing through the meadow-brook,
Sees it flowing—flowing!
"Dearie me!" sighs little Flower,
"If I only had the power
Just to flow to meet the sea—
Then I would contented be."

Little Blue-eyed Flower!—
When the sun is setting
Red behind the distant hills
You can hear her fretting.
"Dearie me!" sighs little Flower,
"If I only had the power
To be big and round and bright
Then the world would be all right."

LITTLE BLUE-EYED FLOWER (*Continued*)

Little Blue-eyed Flower—
  As the days go by her
Sighs for something far away,
  Something stronger, higher,
"Dearie me!" sighs little Flower,
  "If I *only* had the power!"
So all day she sits and cries
  All the blue out of her eyes!

Little Blue-eyed Flower,
  Sighing in the clover,
He who made you what you are
  Will not make you over.
But, bethink you, little Flower
  Is it true you have no power?
What about your golden cup
  Where a honey-bee may sup?

THE WIND FAIRY

THERE'S a fairy lives in the heart of the Wind,
Like the mermaids live in the sea,
Her face she hides but you hear her sing
"Ou-ee, Ou-ee, Ou-ee!"

When the Autumn comes and the days are grey
And the Wind rides wild and high,
She leaps to the back of an eager cloud
And gallops across the sky.

Then down she swoops with a shrill "Ho, ho,"
To whistle and call in the eaves,
Or dance in the dust of the long white road
With a swirl of bewildered leaves!

With the soft West Wind she has songs to sing
Of countries far and fair,
And she calls to the birds with a word so sweet
That they follow her everywhere.

When the stars peep out on a summer's night
She strays o'er the garden grass,
And the blue-bells ring and the roses sway
And jostle to see her pass.

THE WIND FAIRY (*Continued*)

But her voice is sad when the rain-wind blows;
  Like a child who is left alone
She sighs all day to the whispering brook
  And sobs in an undertone.

One day she came to the nursery door,
  And rattled the latch and cried!
And tossed a leaf at the windowpane,
  Till I opened the window wide.

I felt her pass—and the curtains swayed
  And the pictures stirred on the wall
But when I had shut the window, quick—
  She was not in the room at all!

I followed her out through the garden gate,
  I followed across the stream,
Then I followed her back—and in bed that night
  I followed her into a dream.

I dreamed of a fine tea-party, spread
  High up on a tossing tree,
With a nice white cloud for a table-cloth
  And the Wind Fairy pouring tea!

THE VALENTINE REGAINED

WAY high up in the attic-room where me and Billy play,
There's lots and lots of lovely things that mother's put away,
And if we're good as good can be, why, we can have most all we see.

To-day we found a *curyus* box, the lock of it was gone,
And inside was a picture card with funny writing on,
"O fairest Jane, my heart is thine, accept from me this Valentine."

Billy, he didn't care for it but I thought it was sweet,
The picture was an angel-one with clouds wrapped round its feet.
From what it said inside 'twas plain the angel must have been called Jane.

I went straight down where mother was, to let her have a look,
Before I pasted it away in my new pasting-book,
But, when my mother saw it, she just took it right away from me.
She looked so funny and her face got such a lovely red,

THE VALENTINE REGAINED (*Continued*)

"Why, it's my Valentine you've found!" was what my
mother said,
And then she hid away her eyes, just like our Billy
when he cries.

Only a minute though and then she smiled so sweet
at me,
"Oh, what a puzzled face!" she said and took me on
her knee—
"Why, mother's name was Jane, you know, Oh long
and long and long ago!"

SUNSET CITY

SUNSET CITY lies along Twilight's
smooth, grey sea,
And a river wanders there,
Flowing from no man knows where—
Swiftly, silently!

Glitt'ring palaces outline where the river flows,
Citadels without a name
Silhouette their towers in flame—
Crimson, gold and rose.

Quiet streets wind up and up to a magic height,
And the wond'ring eyes behold
Pavements of aerial gold
Delicate as light.

From the stately battlements banners flaunt and
fall,
Lances gleam and pennons float,
(Hark! was that a bugle's note?
Or a wild bird's call?)

Stately galleons anchor there in the Twilight sea,
Tyrian purple are their sails
And their decks are piled with bales
Wonderful to see.

SUNSET CITY (*Continued*)

Why these silent fleets sail in none has ever said—
Do the fairies come to buy
When the stars are in the sky
And we're safe in bed?

Ah, if you would answer that, you must find the way
To this lovely Sunset Town
With the river winding down
To the close of Day!

THE CRY-BABY

OME, O my!"
Sighed the April sky,
"My tears go pitter-patter,
Yet why 'tis so
I do not know—
For there's not a thing the matter!

"I am really gay,
In an April way,
But, should I indulge in laughter,
(O my, O me!)
There is sure to be
A terrible shower after!

"I should love to smile
Just a little while,
For the robins sound so cheery!
But my eyes of blue
Have scarce peeped through
Before they are dull and teary.

"I fairly hate
To be thought sedate
And fickle and fond of sighing—
And the world won't see

THE CRY-BABY (*Continued*)

(O my, O me!)
That it's not my fault I'm crying.

"For the fact appears
That without my tears
There'd not be a green thing showing,
And an April sky
Has to cry and cry
Just to start the earth a-growing!"

THE BALLAD OF THE FOUR YOUTHS

A YOUTH to the hilltop glanced and said,
"The summit's the place for me,
And day by day I shall force my way
To the height that I dimly see.
And nothing shall charm me to turn aside,
And nothing shall turn me back—
Not even a heed for another's need
Or care for another's lack.

"For there're very few folk on the hilltop,
And millions of men below—
When a man would reign, what's a little pain?
It isn't *his* pain, you know!"

A youth to the hilltop glanced and said,
"There is room at the top. I see,
In this crowded race, 'tis the only place
For a sensitive chap like me!
When the people learn of my just desert
They'll bring me the gilded car,
Which is all I need to attain with speed
The place where the laurels are.

"For there're very few folk on the hilltop,
And nothing at all to do,
'Twill be quite my line just to sit and shine
And praise the extensive view!"

THE BALLAD OF THE FOUR YOUTHS (*Continued*)

A youth to the hilltop glanced and said,
"I crave for the purer air
And the brighter light and the wider sight
And the peace which is found up there!
I shrink from the roar of the market-place
And the folk that I mix with here—
I am rare and fine and my soul can't shine
In so murky an atmosphere.

"For there're very few folk on the hilltop,
The crowd you can leave by the way,
And to worship art as a thing apart
Is to be of a finer clay."

A youth to the hilltop glanced and said,
"I'll aim for the highest seat,
But how fine 'twould be could I take with me
The dozens of friends I meet!"
But *he* never sat in the seat he craved,
For he wasted time on a song,
And he cleared the road and he bore a load
For a traveller not as strong.

For there're very few folk on the hilltop,
And millions of men on the plain,
And another's need interferes with speed,
With nothing but love to gain.

MOTHER'S SONGS

OUR mother sings quite different songs
From those we learn at school
And we all think that mother's songs
Are nicer as a rule—

There's one quite lovely one that tells
About "Sweet Ella Rhree,"
And one of "Darling Nellie Gray,"
And one of "Rosa Lee."

And one about a "Minstrel Boy,"
Who to the war has gone,
And all about his father's sword
That he has girded on.

There's one about "Toll, Toll the Bell,"
(For dark eyed laughing Nell),
And one called "Swinging in the Lane,"
I like it specially well.

Another one goes very high
About an "Evening Star,"
And "Blue Alsatian Mountains," too,
(I wonder where they are!)

MOTHER'S SONGS (*Continued*)

In fact the songs we sing at school
  Are just plain everyday,
But all the songs that mother sings
  Seem far and far away!

THE ATTIC WINDOW

OF all the windows in our house,
I like the attic window best;
Because it's high and small and round,
And oh, so different from the rest!
He sees my books upon the shelf,
For every single way you look
Is like a fairy picture-book!

Such lovely things there are outside!
Red chimney-stacks, and near, blue sky,
And fat cats walking on the roofs,
And baby cloudlets skipping by;
And pigeons cooing on the sill,
So I can stroke them, if I will!

The smoke plumes from the chimney-stacks
Are banners waving to and fro,
While gallant knights, with prancing steeds,
Through the long roof-lanes come and go.
The clouds at sunset often hold
Great palaces of shining gold.

The wind comes rushing 'round the eaves,
Shakes the loose catch, and cries, "How do?"
Then whirls away to chase the birds
And tumble down a nest or two;

THE ATTIC WINDOW (*Continued*)

But though he's rough as he can be,
He always has a laugh for me.

The sun steps in and cries, "Hello!
  Here's just the place I'm looking for!"
He sees my books upon the shelf,
  He sees my toys upon the floor—
And then he sees *me* sitting there,
And runs warm fingers through my hair.

Just think! if some day I should be
  A great white bird with beating wing,
And from my window fly away
  Over the edge of everything,
Oh, wouldn't it be fine to know
Where all the summer daytimes go!

MEHITABLE ANN

I LOVE Mehitable Ann!
Last night my sister said:
"Mehitable Ann is far from new;
I'd put her away if I were you—
Love Princess Pry instead!"

But I love Mehitable Ann!
And I *can't* love Pry instead.
If Mehitable's cheeks are pale and white;
They lost their red that awful night
The puppy chewed her head.

And I love Mehitable Ann—
She can't help being thin,
And there isn't a single reason why
She can't be as plump as Princess Pry
If I put more sawdust in.

The Princess Pry is nice;
And so is teeny Nan—
She's in-de-struct-i-ble, too, you see—
But something away inside of me
Just *loves* Mehitable Ann!

Something away inside of me
Just *loves* Mehitable Ann!

THE MORNING SUN

I LIKE the sun of afternoon
So golden and so mellow;
I like the sun who goes to bed
Wrapped up in red and yellow;
But I don't like the morning sun,
I never get my dream-thinks done—
He's such a saucy fellow!

When I am just, say, half awake,
He's at my window peeping,
And, though I shut my eyes hard-tight,
I feel him coming, creeping
Across the carpet to my bed,
No matter how I turn my head,
It means "good-bye" to sleeping!

He dances on my eyes, and shouts
"Hi, there! get up this minute!
There's something doing out of doors;
Look sharp! *You* won't be in it!
I do so hate to hear you snore.
The birds are up this hour or more—
Hark! Don't you hear that linnet?"

Now that might be all right, you know,
If one were really lazy;

THE MORNING SUN (*Continued*)

But when one only likes to lie
With thoughts all dreamy-hazy
And misty-queer, it seems a sin
To have that Mr. Sun dance in
To drive a person crazy!

WHILE GETTING WELL

A LITTLE bird sits on my window-sill
And winks his eye at me and says, "Hello!
Sick are you? Why, whatever's wrong?
I'm never sick, you know!"

And, just at breakfast-time, in comes the Sun
To make queer wiggly patterns on the wall
And laugh and say, "Oh, lazy-bones, get up!
You are not sick *at all!*"

And when I shut my eyes I hear the brook
Calling and calling as it hurries by—
I *can't* lie still! I'm hot and *mis'rable*—
I'm 'fraid I've got to cry!

The leaves just whisper, whisper all the time!
The little clouds all hurry by so quick!—
And nothing seems to care a speck about
A little child that's sick!

Oh! Here's the Wind! How cool his fingers are!
He steals across the bed and feels my hands
And my hot head, and doesn't say a word—
I think *he* understands!

A LITTLE BIRD SITS ON MY WINDOW-SILL

THE TELL-TALE

WE used to like the little birds,
We thought them good and kind;
We never took a single egg
('Less we left lots behind),
And every morning me and Bill
Put crumbs upon the window-sill!

There was a Robin used to hop
Right close beside our door,
He'd cock his saucy head and say:
"Please, boy, I want some more,"
And I would say: "Here's more for you
And some for Mrs. Robin, too."

But one day Bill and me went down
To paddle in the stream
And fell splash in! We'd sense enough
To know we mustn't scream.
And when we'd dried our clothes quite well
You couldn't hardly, poss'bly tell!

But when we both got home that night
Our mother knew it all.
She knew how we'd been *soakin'* wet,
And how we came to fall—

THE TELL-TALE (*Continued*)

And when she tucked us up in bed,
"A little birdie told!" she said.

Bill thinks it was the Robin, and
He feels just mighty sore;
He says: "That bird can get his crumbs
At some one else's door!"
I—just can't hardly b'lieve that he
Would go and *tell* on Bill and me!

THE MERCHANTS

I AM the Frost,
I'll show you diamonds, laces and tapestries
Of all variety at lowest cost;
Weavings of chaste design
Perfect in every line;
Connoisseurs surely will buy of the Frost.

I am the Dew.
Notice my elegant bracelets and necklaces,
All of rare quality; pearls not a few;
Emerald and amethyst;
Opal all rainbow kissed;
Ladies rise early to buy of the Dew.

I am the Snow.
Let me display for you carpets most exquisite.
Choicest of bordering also I show,
Heavy and soft and white,
Spread in a single night;
Folk who have wisdom will buy of the Snow.

I am the Rain.
Something I'll show you priceless and wonderful,
Making these offers seem tawdry and vain!
'Tis but a cloak of grey—
Wrapping the world away—
Happy the few who will buy of the Rain.

I DO! DON'T YOU?

"SUMMER," said the humming Bee,
"Summer is the time for me!
Richest fields of luscious clover,
Honey-cups all brimming over,
Not a cloud the long day through!
I like Summer best—don't you?"

Said the dainty Primrose sweet:
"Summer is the time of heat.
In the Spring when birds are calling
And the crystal rain is falling
All the world is cool and new!
I like Springtime best—don't you?"

Said the Apple: "Not at all,
There's no season like the Fall!
Golden skies thro' soft mist glowing
Where the golden-rod is growing,
Reaping done and harvest through—
I like Autumn best—don't you?"

Said the Holly: "It is clear
Of all seasons of the year
Winter is the best and dearest,
Winds are stillest, skies are clearest—
Snowballs, sleighrides, Christmas—whew!
I like Winter best—*don't you?*"

MISTRESS SPRING-IN-A-HURRY

DEARIE O Me! I am quite in a flutter,
I've forgotten to churn the new butter-cup's butter,
I've forgotten to set all the lily-bells ringing,
I've forgotten to tune up the robins for singing,
Dearie O me, and Dearie O my!
Was ever a Springtime so flustered as I?

Come, Mr. Sun, shine a little bit hotter,
Don't hide your face, please, and stop drinking water,
Mr. Wind, get out your big broom for sweeping,
Shame, Madam Rain! this is no time for weeping,
Come now, look pleasant, the swift hours fly,
Shake out your cloudlets and hang them to dry!

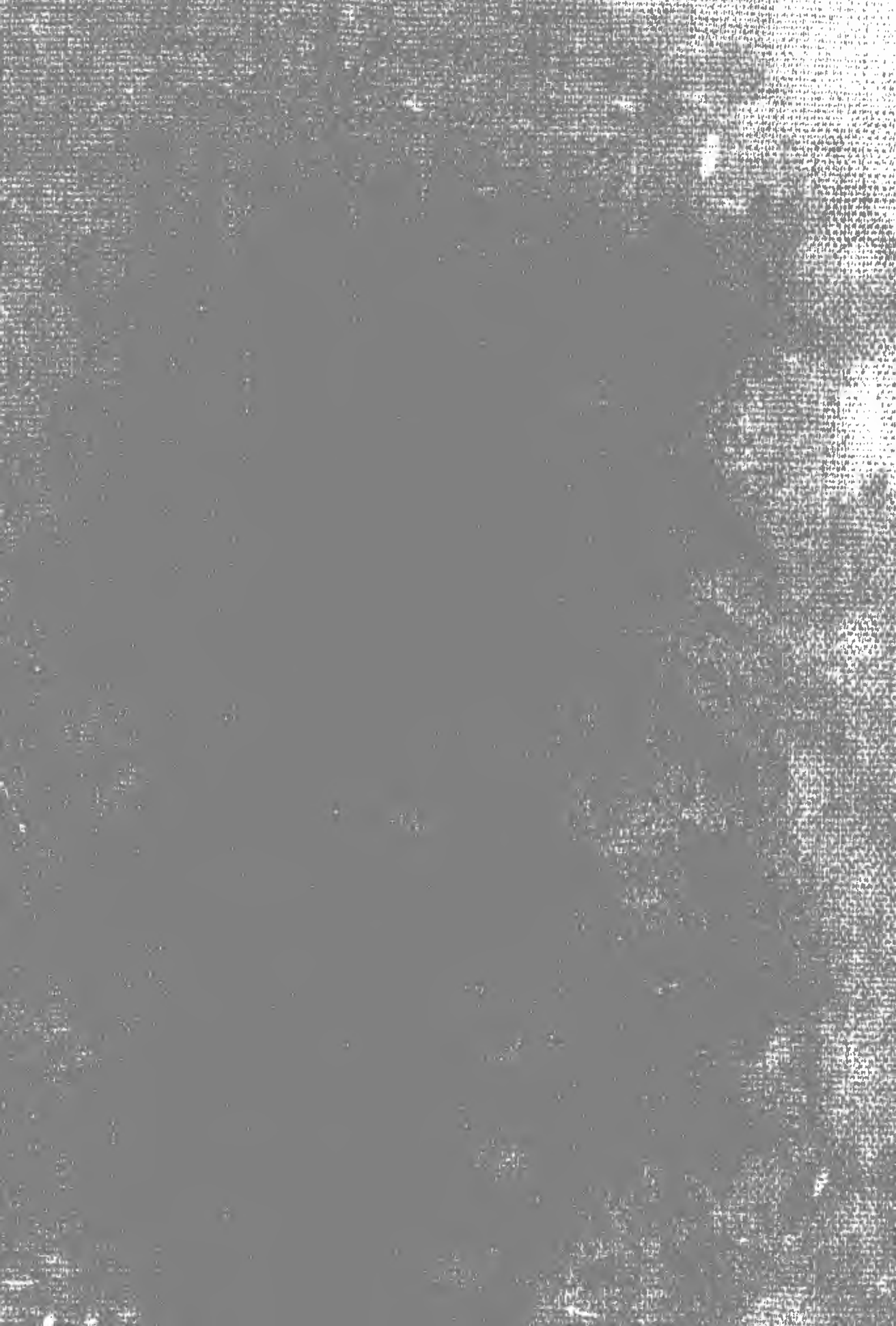
Young Johnnie Frost, you run home and remember
You're not wanted here till sometime next November,
Ha, now we have it!—a little more green,
Brighten that yellow, slip pink in between,
Don't talk to me about colours that blend,
Slap them all on, 'tis the same in the end.

Send up the Mayflowers, sweet smelling piles of them,
Catkins and marsh-mallows, I can use miles of them,
Shake all those lazy trees, tickle their toes—
Don't plant hypaticas stiffly in rows,

MISTRESS SPRING-IN-A-HURRY (*Continued*)

Jumble them up a bit, crimson and blue,
Wind-flowers, violets, trilliums too!

That's the idea! and now for the gardens—
Poke up the hyacinths ere the soil hardens,
Mass purple lilacs down there by the walk,
Line up the daffodils here—and don't talk—
Rainbow-hued crocuses, narcissus white,
Soak all in perfume and leave over night.

Here come the birds! What a stirring and questing,
Fat robins chirping and bob-o-links nesting,
Gay sparrows chattering, meadow-larks racing—
Swift as the shade of the clouds they are chasing—
Green on the hillside and gold in the sky!
Was ever a Springtime so sprightly as I?

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